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WARTIME EXTENSION WORK

SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Some high lights of the week's summary: Work of 4-H and home demonstration clubs on fire prevention; increased poultry production; larger potato yield as result of certified-seed campaign; 4-H Club "Feed a Fighter" program; and supplementary food supply from wildlife, especially fish in farm ponds.

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KANSAS

December 13, 1943

Poultry.--Preliminary estimates of Bureau of Agricultural Economics are that 35,249,000 chickens were raised in Kansas in 1943 -- 13 percent increase over 1942 and 23 percent over 10-year average (1932-41). Goal for 1943 was 34,937,000 chickens; or 12 percent more than in 1942. In first 10 months of 1943, 1,940 million eggs were produced in Kansas -- increase of 13.4 percent over same period of 1942. Egg goal in 1943 called for 12 percent increase over 1942. Indicated number of turkeys raised in Kansas in 1943 is 958,000 or 10 percent less than in 1942. Goal was 1,224,000 turkeys, 15 percent increase over 1942.

Major activities in poultry extension wartime program during last quarter of 1943 were culling and poultry improvement under national poultry improvement plan. Rapid increase in number of chickens on farms, inadequate equipment, and shortage of feed made it necessary to emphasize close culling of hens and pullets to conserve feed and produce efficiently. More than 700,000 birds were selected, banded, and pullorum-tested under poultry-improvement program, September to December, by official selecting and pullorum-testing agents working under Kansas Poultry Improvement Association. These birds will make up breeding flocks to supply eggs to U. S. approved and certified hatcheries in 1944. Since hatcheries supply 90 percent of chicks raised on Kansas farms, improvement in quality of these chicks will bring about production of more eggs at less cost for feed and labor, and be basis for efficient poultry and egg production program.

Dairying.--In last 3 months, major fairs were held as climax of year's work, which starts with spring shows. Breeders derived much benefit from this activity. Marion County fair, second largest dairy cattle show in State, was help in that county because of large cooperative creamery.

Through meetings, radio talks, and news articles, assistance was given producers on production methods with use of home-grown feeds. Use of protein supplements was stressed for higher-producing cows, so that quantity available would produce the most.

Meetings were held with representatives of cooperative creameries to study question of converting plants to shift part of their production to powdered skim milk, which is badly needed today.

4-H Club activities.-Three important series of meetings in December consisted of annual 4-H Club achievement banquets; annual county farm bureau meetings, at which 4-H Club work was presented to adult membership of organization; and training conferences for new leaders and club officers on how to carry out their work. At all these meetings, recognition was given work done by farm youth in war effort.

Summary is being made on "Feed a Fighter" program carried on by clubs in 1943. In 23 southwestern counties, total of 2,700 fighters had been fed, or average of more than 100 per county. Some of more experienced club members provided food through their projects for as many as 50 fighters. Stress is being given to practical food-production projects on meat and dairy animals, poultry, and food preservation. Later on, gardens, crops, and clothing renovation will be taken up. Special emphasis is now being placed on purchase of beef calves for deferred fed steer project. This has proved to be one of most practical and profitable beef-producing projects for Kansas conditions. Experienced 4-H Club members are being urged to undertake larger projects. Winners of 4-H dairy production contest, all of whom used outstanding production methods, were taken to American Royal Livestock Exhibition and on trips to outstanding farms.

Horticulture.-Maintaining Victory Gardens, harvesting and marketing of 27,000 acres of potatoes and of other truck and fruit crops, have been principal war-time activities on horticultural program in past few months. Number of Victory Gardens, as well as their size and quality and quantity of production, is best in any recent time. In addition to meeting many families' needs for vegetables in season, they have supplied large share of out-of-season needs with stored foods for farm, town, and especially city families. To develop early start on 1944 Victory Garden program, fall plowing of garden sites has been emphasized.

Food Distribution Administration's purchase of 246 carloads protected potato market at floor price. To give grade information, inspection service was used on 955 carloads of potatoes, largest number in recent years. Service was extended this fall to include sweetpotatoes.

Plant pathology.-For 1943 Kansas was asked to increase potato production 122 percent over 1942. To meet this goal, it was necessary to encourage home gardeners to plant and raise more potatoes. They were urged to plant only certified seed and to treat seed to bring increased yield. This certified-seed campaign was pushed in at least 72 counties. Reports by county agents indicated more than 75,860 sacks of certified seed were sold in these counties. Increased yields of 25 to 30 percent, amounting to about 5 or 6 bushels of potatoes a sack, can usually be expected from certified seed over ordinary or home-grown seed. On this basis campaign resulted in at least 379,300 more bushels of potatoes than if ordinary seed had been planted. In addition, gardeners and

farmers report potatoes from certified seed keep better than potatoes from ordinary market seed. In many counties in 1943, large percentage of potato seed was treated before it was planted. This resulted in increased yields due to control of seed-borne rhizoctonia, and reduction in amount of seed-piece decay.

Flaxseed treatment with new improved Ceresan was first recommended in Kansas in 1941. Acreage planted with treated seed in that year was slight, but increased in 1942. In 1943, farmers were encouraged to treat all flaxseed planted, and publicity given resulted in considerable acreage being planted with treated seed. In demonstration plot harvested in Elk County in 1943, seed treatment increased yield of flax by 1.3 bushels an acre. Goal for Kansas in 1944 is 350,000 acres. If all this acreage were planted with treated seed, considerable increase in flaxseed production in Kansas could be expected.

Farm machinery.—In 10 counties 43 meetings on care and repair of farm tractors were held during month, with attendance of 1,163. Excellent interest and cooperation were shown by dealers. Also held were 19 other extension farm machinery meetings attended by 793; 24 dealer meetings in 9 counties, attended by 423; and 37 tractor schools in 6 counties, with attendance of 725.

TEXAS

December 1, 1943

Farm labor.—Peak of farm labor needs for 1943 was reached in November. Principal demand in approaching months will be for year-round workers. Demand for seasonal workers has relaxed. Some 350 laborers, adults and minors, are being assembled in south Texas to be lent to Arizona. Crops have been harvested without loss through cooperative endeavor. Boys and girls from Fredericksburg contributed 79 man-days to harvesting peanuts and other crops. In Runnels County, agricultural agent helped with placement of local crews which worked in neighborhoods. To encourage volunteer workers, Liberty County farmers sponsored 7-week cotton-picking contest for townspeople, who picked 19,486 pounds. War prisoners saved the day in Jefferson County. At one time 20,000 acres of rice lay on ground unshocked and open to ruin had rain fallen. Total of 150 prisoners of war aided growers in harvesting 63,000 acres of rice. Necessity caused farmers in Mills County to devise new methods of harvesting. In Big Valley community, slides made from 1-by-4's, gate fashion, were used to load peanuts in field for transport to thresher. One man with tractor was able to operate several slides, whereas when wagons were used operator was required for each.

Wildlife.—Game-management demonstration involving all desirable species continues to mark Extension's approach to wildlife conservation. Under longtime conservation program landowners usually pool acreage to form cooperative and operate combined area as unit through their game-management association, composed of landowners and operators whose acreage is involved. Program is aimed toward habitat improvement and predator control and also includes controlled harvest during open seasons. Only surplus game is taken, and ample seed stock is provided. Group meetings of county agricultural agents from 12 extension districts gave emphasis to (1) production of domestic rabbits to supplement wartime meat supply and (2) production of more fish in farm ponds as secondary source of meat for farm and ranch families. Ten State and nine Federal fish hatcheries serving Texas cooperated with county agents in record distribution of fish for stocking farm ponds. Fresh-water resources of State include 485 lakes, 100,000 farm

ponds, and 21,000 miles of streams. Extension game-management specialist assisted in conducting 4-H Club wildlife conservation short course, attended by 65 club boys, selected on basis of work done.

Dairying.-Extension dairy specialists, by means of meetings, radio, and special articles for agricultural publications, have helped dairymen in meeting feed situation. They brought about organization of two new dairy-herd-improvement associations. However, four established associations have suspended testing on account of scarcity of testers. Specialists also helped boys' 4-H Clubs locate and buy registered dairy heifers.

Cotton.-Upland cotton ginned in Texas through October 31 was higher in grade but averaged shorter in staple than in corresponding period last season, according to WFA survey. Texas producers planted slightly higher percentage of approved varieties than in 1942. Reports of tests made by U. S. Fiber and Spinning Laboratories show that variety is better indication of quality than is length of staple. Records of laboratories are confirmed by some southeastern spinners who tested 1943 growths of Texas approved varieties. Although much of State's cotton was reduced in staple length, quality was not lowered in same proportion. Interest in planting approved varieties in 1944 is evident in all sections of State. Producers are organizing communities into cotton-improvement associations and arranging to obtain planting seed.

Beef cattle.-During autumn months every county agricultural agent in State was given detailed information on national grub control program and supplied with posters and printed matter for distribution to livestockmen. Treatment demonstrations were given in southern part of State. Steers on experimental feeding at Spur Experimental Substation were treated, and detailed outline was undertaken on effects of grub infestation on cattle in feed lots. Specialists held three 2-day schools to give county agricultural agents detailed information and instruction on animal parasite control and maintenance of health of livestock. 4-H Club calves shown at National Hereford Show at Dallas sold for 30 cents and upward.

Agricultural economics.-Extension economist in farm management drew upon his experience at National Outlook Conference, Washington, in participating in agents' district outlook conferences. He placed emphasis on such phases as general demand, prices, industrial production, agricultural production, farm commodity situations, factors of production, and post-war adjustments. He also held income-tax workshops in three districts where agents were given laboratory exercise in making out income-tax return. Procedure simulated a farmer making his December 15 estimate. Economist was called into conference several times by committee from State bankers' association with view to producing quarterly publication on seasonal agriculture in the different temperature zones of Texas.

Rodent control.-Along with work on prairie dogs and jack rabbits to halt damage to Panhandle wheatfields, extension efforts are being concentrated on methods for permanent control of rats. These include ratproofing of buildings, general clean-up, and garbage disposal, as well as poisoning and trapping. Dallas, Fort Worth, Beaumont, and other Texas cities have adopted ordinances requiring owners of buildings harboring rats to eliminate them.

Fire prevention.--Reemphasizing importance of fire prevention, Extension Service leaflet, Prevent Farm Fires, was distributed to all farm and ranch families on lists of neighborhood Victory leaders. Many county home demonstration agents enlisted cooperation of members of home demonstration clubs in fire prevention. They asked women to check again on fire hazards in homes and report at club meetings what they had done to eliminate them. Each member also was asked to revive interest of neighboring families in fire prevention. Many county extension agents are encouraging members of girls' and boys' 4-H Clubs to seek out and overcome fire hazards. Midland, Dawson, Johnson, Grimes, and Denton Counties report good work on fire prevention, including a number of radio broadcasts during the year. At Johnson City 4-H Club girls gave few minutes of each program during year to fire prevention, and each month girls decided on things they could do to neutralize fire dangers. Bailey County extension agents have given demonstrations to 18 girls' and boys' 4-H Clubs on care and safety rules and on repairing electric cords and plugs.

Home management.--Extension home-management specialist held individual and group conferences with county home demonstration agents on plans for assisting people in work simplification, time management, financial planning, and general home management to meet wartime conditions. Specialist and WPB representative conducted survey at Orange to determine what needed articles it was impossible for people to buy. To obtain information they interviewed 9 merchants and also 22 homemakers representing 141 persons.

Home demonstration club activities.--Home demonstration club members helped to establish maternity ward in Army hospital at Sheppard Field, Wichita Falls, for wives of Army men after facilities at civilian hospitals became exhausted. They gave supplies, collected articles to make ward more attractive, and contributed layettes. They are also wrapping attractive small gifts to be used as prizes for games and contests held in recreation room of convalescent ward of Army hospital.

Negro activities.--Complete reports from 28 negro county agricultural agents show that negro families bought \$162,048.66 worth of war bonds and stamps during third war loan drive. Total of 273 Victory leaders and number of negro organizations cooperated in drive. Agents report that 118 county and community meetings were held, and leaders reached people in groups and by house-to-house canvass to encourage subscriptions.

In Lavaca County farmers followed tomato crop with peanuts which averaged from 400 to 1,000 pounds yield an acre. Nuts sell for \$156 upward a ton and hay for \$40 a ton. In Cherokee County 34 adult demonstrators grew 340 acres of improved Spanish peanuts after using average of 200 pounds of 4-8-4 fertilizer an acre. Yield averaged 34 bushels an acre, valued at \$24,270, along with 13,940 bales of hay valued at \$1 a bale. Farmers worked cooperatively in harvesting and threshing peanuts. Carl Fretwell, Tarrant County negro 4-H Club boy, produced 514 bushels of sweetpotatoes on 3 acres. In that county, 4-H Club boys picked and snapped 700 bales of cotton. Tarrant County negro families harvested more than 5,000 bushels of sweetpotatoes and solved storage problem by using kilns, cellars, and smokehouses. More than 50 bushels have been canned.

Twenty-one market hogs, weighing total of 4,006 pounds, were shown at first all-negro county pig show in Fort Bend County. Thomas A. Douglas, Navarro County 4-H Club boy, has bought four war bonds out of profits from livestock demonstrations of past 3 years.

Ben Johnson, 16-year-old Madison County negro 4-H Club boy, harvested 400 pounds of lint cotton and 800 pounds of seed on 1 acre of land rented from his father for his 1943 demonstration. He treated his poor, sandy soil with 200 pounds of fertilizer after flat breaking in January, and planted to certified seed in April. Cotton was cultivated six times after chopping, and dusted with sulfur and calcium arsenate every 5 days during production period. After paying rent and other expenses, Ben had net profit of \$49. Demonstration showed farmers of community that yield may be increased by fertilization, cultivation, and insect control.